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AUTHOR	Smith, Cindra
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ABSTRACT

This document reports the results of a survey conducted in the summer of 1998. Community college districts in California was surveyed on their practices regarding local board education and development programs. Approximately 80% of the districts, or 57 districts, responded. The study found that less than one-third of the districts had a written policy regarding trustee education, and that 75% of the districts used the League's Trustee Handbook for local trustee education. All but two boards reported using either study sessions during or in lieu of board meetings and/or retreats for board education. Retreats were the most common approach used, with 75% of boards holding retreats at least once a year. Mentoring is only used in about 30% of the districts surveyed. In addition, in all but one of the districts, trustees attend one or more of the League's conferences. Conferences were identified as the most effective method of trustee education, followed by board retreats (with outside facilitators), study sessions, and local trustee orientation. Based upon these findings, the report offers a number of recommendations to the Community College League of California. Many of the recommendations encouraged the League to support the activities mentioned above, as well as to develop guidelines for mentoring programs and to provide examples of board education policy statements and local trustee handbooks. (TGO)

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ED 431 499

LOCAL TRUSTEE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESULT OF A SURVEY

Cindra Smith, Ed. D.
Director of Education Services

In conjunction with the
Advisory Committee on Education Services
Community College League of California
2017 O Street
Sacramento, California

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LOCAL TRUSTEE EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Highlights

In summer 1998, the League surveyed community college districts in California on their practices regarding local board education and development programs. 57 districts (80.3%) returned surveys. Highlights of the results are:

- Less than 1/3 of the districts have a written statement or policy regarding trustee education.
- All but two boards reported using either study sessions during or in lieu of board meetings and/or retreats for board education, with most using at least two of the three approaches. Retreats were the most common approach used, with ¾ of the districts holding board retreats at least once a year.
- Study sessions address a wide variety of issues. Topics at study sessions during board meetings are focused on budget, educational programs, planning, and internal operations of the college. Topics at study sessions held in lieu of board meetings tend to be related to budget, planning, and governance issues.
- Retreats tend to address boardsmanship, board and CEO evaluation, and goal setting. Most districts use an outside facilitator at least occassionally.
- 75% of the districts used the League's Trustee Handbook for local trustee education. Just over a third have a local trustee handbook.
- Mentoring of new trustees, whether formal or informal, occurs in about 30% of the districts.
- In all but one of the districts, trustees attend one or more of the League's conferences. In 60% of the districts, trustees also attend the ACCT convention. The League conferences are rated highly.
- Conferences were identified as the most effective method of trustee education, followed by board retreats (with outside facilitators), study sessions, and local trustee orientation.
- Individual board members, the board as a whole, and the CEO are significantly involved in identifying needs for trustee education. Programs are designed by the CEO and to a lesser extent the board as a whole and the chair. Program implementation is usually the responsibility of the CEO, with some chairs also assuming some responsibility.

Implications

The Community College League of California should:

- continue to offer high quality conferences and workshops.
- continue to provide prepare high quality written materials on topics related to budget, planning, and boardsmanship issues.
- encourage boards to hold retreats.
- continue to provide resources and facilitators for those retreats.
- provide CEOs with resources that assist them to implement board education programs.
- develop guidelines for mentoring programs, and provide examples of board education policy statements and local trustee handbooks.

Survey Results

Respondents

Surveys were mailed to the CEOs and board chairs in the 71 California community college districts. Surveys were returned from 57 districts (80.3%).

35 Completed by CEOs
17 Completed by trustees
4 Completed by the CEO and trustee, and responses were combined.
1 Completed by the assistant to the board

Have a Policy or Written Plan Related to Trustee Education

Yes – 17 (29.8%)
No – 40 (70.2%)

Study Sessions and Retreats

Study sessions at board meetings: 31 districts (54.4%).

Times per year	Number of Districts
1 or 2	10
2 – 4	6
4 – 6	7
7 or more	8
As needed	1

Topics: Those listed were a wide variety and tended to focus on internal operations of the college.

Topics at Study Sessions	# of Times Listed
Budget and Finance	15
Plans, Goals, and Planning	13
Educational Programs; Program Review; Curriculum	12
Facilities and Capital Outlay	7
Future, Visioning, Mission	6

Boardsmanship/Governance	4
Board Evaluation	4
Student Services	4
Distance Learning	4
Policy	4
Collective Bargaining, CFIER	4
Technology	4
Shared Governance	2
CalWorks	2
Accreditation	2
Legislation	2

Topics that were mentioned once included: Legal issues; Brown Act, conflict of interest, marketing, staff development, environmental scanning, CPEC, alternative funding, risk management, hiring process, diversity, health plan, foundation, bond issues, learning paradigm, community connections.

Study sessions in lieu of board meetings: 32 districts (56.1%)

Times Per Year	Number of Districts
1 or 2	13
3 – 4	10
5 – 7	6
8 or more times	1

Topics: Fewer topics were listed in this category and they were more general:

Topic	# of Times Listed
Budget	14
Planning	8
Shared Governance	7
Facilities & Capital Outlay	3
Diversity & Affirmative Action	3
Board Evaluation	3
Policy	2
Student Services/Student Profile	2
Technology	2
Collective Bargaining & Salaries	2

Topics that were mentioned once were: vision and mission, educational programs, board/CEO relations, state budget, military recruitment, institutional effectiveness, and new trustee orientation.

Board retreats: 43 districts (75.4%)

Times Per Year	Number of Districts
Once	28
Twice	2
1 – 3	5
4 or more	1

Topics focused on boardmanship and planning issues. Specific numbers are:

Topic	# of times listed
Boardsmanship & Governance	11
Board Self-evaluation	12
Planning	11
Goal Setting (Bd & District)	10
CEO Evaluation	5
Board/CEO Relations	4
Policy	4
Vision and Mission	3
District Operations	2
Foundation & Fundraising	2

Topics mentioned once were Chancellor selection, educational issues, Brown Act, Bond issues, community connections, communication, technology, and accreditation.

Outside facilitators used for retreats: 1 always, 7 usually, 30 occasionally, 1 rarely, and 9 never.

Summary of approaches used

55 (96.5%) districts used at least one of the three approaches listed above
- 14 districts use all three types of educational sessions
- 26 used two types
- 15 used one approach

Written Materials

League Trustee Handbook:	43 districts (75.4%)
Local trustee handbook:	19 districts (33.3%)
Other materials:	24 districts Materials listed included the Brown Act, ethics statements, articles, AGB & ACCT publications, board evaluation, and mission.

Trustees Regularly Attend the Following Conferences

Trustee Orientation:	40 districts
League Legislative Conf:	44 districts
Annual Trustee Conference:	47 districts
ACCT Annual Convention:	35 districts
ACCT Regionals:	21 districts

Other: 7, including the League's Annual Convention, ACCT/AACC National Legislative Seminar, AACC Annual Conference, CC Foundation Tech Ed Conference.

Best Conferences:

The survey asked which conferences tended to be best. Not all respondents listed conferences. Of of those who did:

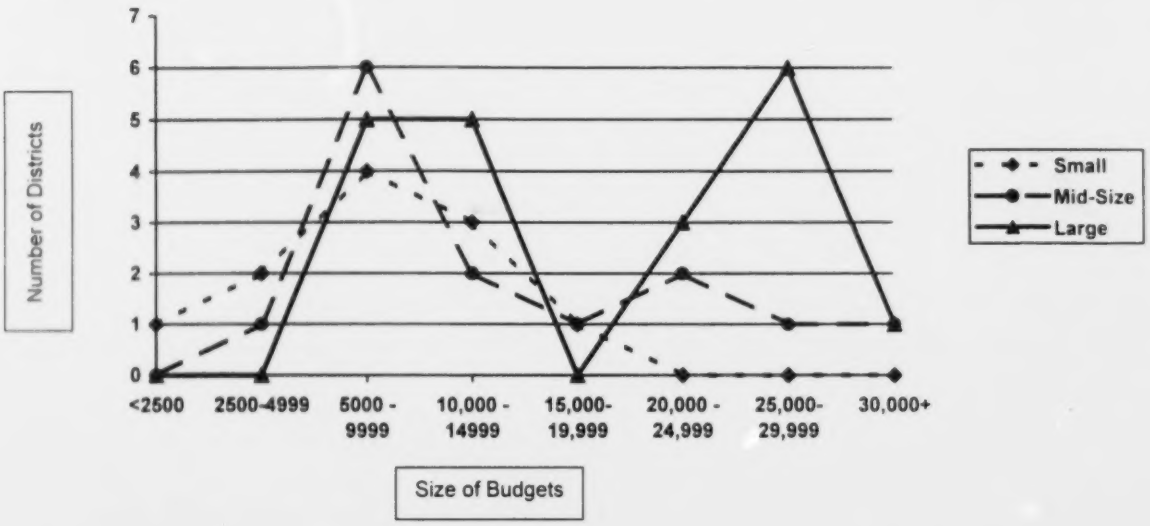
Conference	Times listed
CCCT Annual Conference	15
League Convention	12
Trustee Orientation	9
Legislative Conference	9
ACCT Convention	5
AACC	2

Number of trustees who usually attend: All – 11; most – 25; one or two – 17.

Budgets for Trustee Conference and Travel

Size of district* and board	Range of budgets	Average of budgets
Large dist / 7 member boards	$5,000 – 27,500	$15,450
Large dist / 5 member boards	$5,000 – 35,000	$16,580
Medium dist / 7 member boards	$2,500 – 30,000	$12,500
Medium dist / 5 member boards	$9,000 – 25,000	$13,314
Small dist / 7 member boards	$1,000 – 15,000	$8,400
Small dist / 5 member boards	$3,000 – 13,000	$7,400

*Large districts – 20K+ students; Medium district 10K – 20K; Small districts - <10K, as listed in Community College Directory.



Other Local Trustee Education Activities

Information sessions for new trustees: 47 districts (82.5%): 29 for new trustees only, 13 included all trustees.

College/campus tours and visits to programs: 42 districts (73.7%)

Mentoring of new by experienced trustees: 16 districts (28.1%)

Other: 3 (CEO briefings and mentoring)

Three Most Effective Methods (Open-ended Question)

Strategy	# of Times Listed
Conferences (League conferences were included	25
Board Retreats (use of outside facilitators was mentioned often)	17
Written materials & publications (League publications were mentioned)	15
Local Trustee Orientation	12
Study Sessions & Workshops	11
League Trustee Orientation	10
Discussions and one on one sessions with other trustees	9
Mentoring	8
Regular communication	7
Meetings with the CEO/briefings	6
Experience, being on the job	4
Trustee Handbook	4
Board self evaluation	3
Planning meeting	2
Asking questions and listening	1 each

Program Design and Implementation

Who identifies education needs

(Multiple responses: totals equal more than 56)

Individual trustees – 35
Board as a whole – 29
CEO – 41
Board chair – 18
Board committee – 2
Not done – 1

Primary responsibility for program design

Board as a whole – 21
CEO – 38
Board chair – 15
League & CCCT – 5
Board committee – 4

Primary responsibility for program implementation

CEO – 46
Chair – 16
Board as a whole – 9
Individual Trustees – 4

Survey Conducted and Reported By:

Cindra Smith, Ed. D.
cjsmith@ccleague.org
916-444-8641
Community College League of California
Sacramento, CA
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